

REMARKS

The Examiner objected to the title of the invention as allegedly being not descriptive.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4 as best understood under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Applicant Admitted Prior Art (see under the heading “Background”) in view of Iwatsuka *et al.* (5,383,270).

Applicant respectfully traverses the § 112 and § 103(a) rejections with the following arguments:

35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

In accordance with Examiner's rejections, Applicant has amended the claims to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the claimed invention. Applicant has clarified use of the terms: component, component placement machine, and plurality of pick/place heads. Furthermore, Applicant has resolved any discrepancy concerning when the rejecting step may be accomplished.

Based on the preceding arguments, Applicant respectfully contends that claim 1 is not unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 112 rejections, because Applicant's claims, as amended, overcome these rejections. Since claims 2-4 depend from claim 1, Applicant contends that claims 2-4 are likewise in condition for allowance.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4 as best understood under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Applicant Admitted Prior Art (see under the heading “Background”) in view of Iwatsuka *et al.* (5,383,270).

Applicant respectfully contends that claim 1 is not unpatentable over Applicant Admitted Prior Art in view of Iwatsuka, because Applicant Admitted Prior Art in view of Iwatsuka does not teach or suggest each and every feature of claim 1. For example, Applicant Admitted Prior Art in view of Iwatsuka does not teach or suggest a method for rejecting non-placeable components within a single machine-placement cycle, thus avoiding having to interrupt the placement cycle to dispose of non-placeable components. In contrast, Iwatsuka teaches that in the event the component is unacceptable for placement, a signal is outputted which initiates a “suspend mounting operation” that completely stops and disables the placement cycle to prevent the mounting of the improper component (Iwatsuka, Col. 1, lines 58-62; Col. 3, lines 26-32). Once the cycle is stopped, Iwatsuka teaches that the rejected component may be returned to the pick-up station or placed in a reject bin and the operator starts the cycle over (Iwatsuka, Col. 3, lines 4-15). In contradistinction, Applicant’s claimed invention utilizes an on-the-housing reject station to reject non-placeable components completely within a single placement cycle, thereby eliminating the need to suspend the placement cycle to dispose of or prevent mounting of improper components (See Application pg. 6, lines 4-9; pg. 9, lines 11-14; pg. 11, lines 14-15). Therefore, the process and throughput of Applicant’s claimed invention is unaffected by the disposal of non-placeable components (See Application pg. 11, lines 15-19). Also, Applicant’s claimed invention utilizes a vision system, located adjacent to the rotatable frame, that performs an image analysis of individual components to determine whether they are placeable or non-

placeable (Application pg. 10, lines 11-19). Furthermore, Applicant's claimed invention is operative with a plurality of pick/place heads, and is not limited to any number thereof (Application pg. 9, lines 20-22). Hence, Iwatsuka does not teach or suggest the features of Applicant's claimed invention. Based on the preceding arguments, Applicant respectfully maintains that claim 1 is not unpatentable over Applicant Admitted Prior Art in view of Iwatsuka, and that claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Since claims 2-4 depend from claim 1, Applicant contends that claims 2-4 are likewise in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the preceding arguments, Applicant respectfully believes that all pending claims and the entire application meet the acceptance criteria for allowance and therefore requests favorable action. If the Examiner believes that anything further would be helpful to place the application in better condition for allowance, Applicant invites the Examiner to contact Applicant's representative at the telephone number listed below. The Director is hereby authorized to charge and/or credit Deposit Account 19-0513.

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